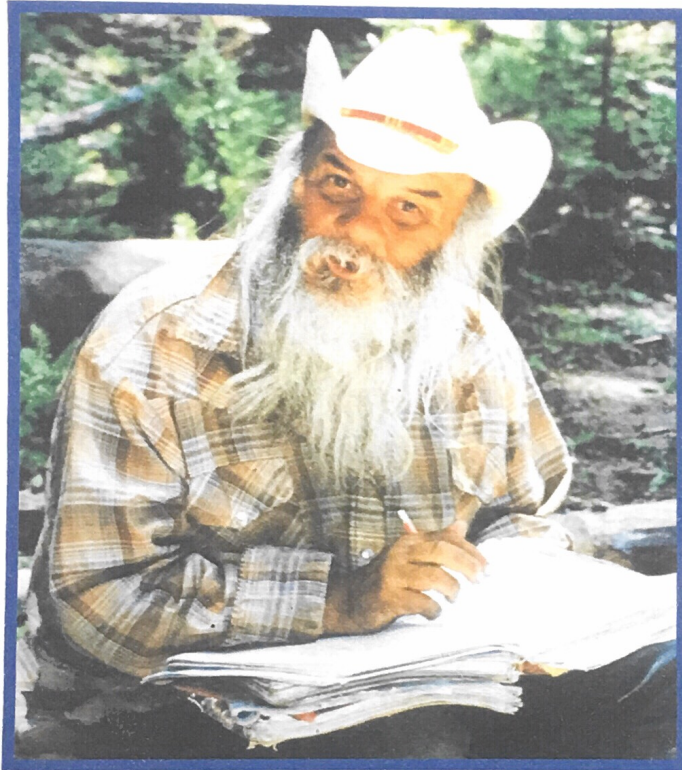




# Rainbow Family

## Life Stories



*by Jodey Bateman.  
Interviews with Rainbow  
Family of Living Light  
folks conducted between  
1977 and 2008.*

*Scanned in 2018.*

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14. "OKLAHOMA RAINBOW"  
- Preface by Jodey

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[14.]



## Oklahoma Rainbow

Oklahoma City is on Interstate 40 - one of the major hitch hiking routes in the USA. Seventeen miles south is the college town of Norman with a potentially sympathetic student population for transients to panhandle and ask for a place to stay. Particularly at the height of the protest movements, students were willing to help out, and also sympathetic older people such as Jane Howe, whose story is included here.

Many Rainbow people had been hitchhiking across Oklahoma for a long time. One Oklahoma City area resident, long associated with the Oklahoma University left wing, took a truckload of grain to the Colorado Gathering in 1972.

However the beginnings of a loose community of people attracted to Rainbow didn't occur in the Oklahoma City area, but among the youth in the fringe around Oklahoma State University at Stillwater, 50 miles to the north. A caravan of buses from the 1975 gathering in Arkansas came to Stillwater to look for jobs repairing damage from a tornado. They found the damage was not nearly as great as they thought it would be.

A woman named Oro gave many of the Rainbow people jobs around OM Cooking, a restaurant she had just started in Stillwater. The original Rainbow camp on Lake Carl Blackwell near Stillwater broke up. Some of the people left the area and others moved into Stillwater or around the nearby town of Coyle. The apartment behind OM Cooking was a center for Rainbow people passing through Stillwater for over a year. Many local Stillwater youth were drawn into Rainbow by this scene around OM Cooking, which lasted until 1977. After Oro left Stillwater in the Fall of 1975, OM Cooking had been largely in the hands of Rainbow people.

As of 1990, most of the Rainbow people have left the Stillwater area except for the Paradise Valley community near Coyle. Other smaller Rainbow scenes are starting to develop in Norman and Tahlequah.